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DO 628

THEOLOGY OF JOHN WESLEY

SPRING 2000

Dr. Allan Coppedge

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PURPOSE

A study of the theological doctrines and opinions of John Wesley and the origin of Methodism as a vigorous reaffirmation of the evangelical faith of Christendom. The development of the doctrinal position of Wesley is studied with reference to his life, work, religious experience, and the Evangelical Revival in England in the eighteenth century. This heritage is studied in order that it may be critically and appropriately explained and communicated.

LEARNING GOALS

1. To provide an introduction to the theology and thought patterns of John Wesley in the following areas:

Prevenient grace and sin; Universal atonement and transforming grace; Justification and regeneration; Sanctification and Christian perfection; Christian life and means of grace; the Church and ministry; Doctrine of God the Father; Doctrines of Grace; Predestination; Religious Authority; Pluralism and the Bible.
2. To offer an analysis of the background factors that influenced Wesley's life and thought.
3. To introduce the life of Wesley and his influence in shaping eighteenth century Methodism.
4. To understand how Methodism is a part of the larger Christian Church and where it contributes to it, especially in the areas of theology and the practice of the Christian life.
5. To see some historical models of the transforming power of grace in the application of Biblical truth to individual lives, the Church, and society.
6. To recognize the practical implications of the theological ideas.
7. To understand the positive and negative lessons from the rise of Methodism and personal lives, the collected body of believers, and the culture at large.
8. To be able from within this heritage to address the theological issues that confront the church and the world today. This goal will be accomplished primarily through lecture and discussion in class.

REQUIREMENTS

I. Study Assignments

- A. Reading and outlining of assignments as indicated in the syllabus.
- B. A Collateral chart (included in syllabus) is to be kept which should include a record of the number of hours per week spent reading, outlining and taken notes. The number of hours studied will determine the grade options available to the student for the entire course. To be eligible to earn any grade up through an "A", a total of at least 52 hours should be spent over the term. For a "B", at least 46 hours per term. For a "C", at least 40 hours per term. At least 36 hours per term is required for a passing grade.
- C. A notebook should be kept of all outlines and notes taken (but not class notes), plus a record of the student's reading. The notebook should be organized by subject (justification, sin, sanctification, etc.). A grade will be given the notebook and the completion of assignments on time. It will constitute 33.3% of the final grade.

II. Examinations

There will be a mid-term and final that will cover reading assignments and class presentation. The date for the mid-term examination is Wednesday, March 22; the final is Thursday, May 18, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

III. Attendance

Attendance at all class periods is expected. Students should report the number of class periods from which he/she has been absent on his/her collateral sheet.

Out of courtesy to other members of the class, it is requested that no food or beverage be consumed in class.

IV. Textbooks

- A. **Required:**
John Wesley, Wesley's Fifty-two Standard Sermons, ed. N. Burwash.
_____, A Plain Account of Christian Perfection.
Kenneth Collins, The Scripture Way of Salvation.
Harold Lindstrom, Wesley and Sanctification.
Kenneth Collins, A Real Christian.
- B. **Recommended:**
Allan Coppedge, John Wesley in Theological Debate.
Kenneth Collins, A Faithful Witness.
- C. **Requested:**
The Holy Bible (RSV) in class.

READING SCHEDULE

Outlining should be done so that the key arguments from any chapter or sermon can be seen from it. Normally two or three pages per chapter and one page per sermon will cover the material, although here are several exceptions to this guideline. In your syllabus is a guide to taking notes from Wesley's A Plain Account of Christian Perfection. This should be used for the assignment on A Plain Account March 20-24.

****BACKGROUND****

February 8-12

Read and Outline: (Required)

Collins, Kenneth, The Scripture Way of Salvation, Introduction, pp. 13-17. Chapter 2: Convincing Grace, pp-68

Read only: (Recommended as hours permit)

Collins, Kenneth, A Real Christian

"BACKGROUND"

February 14-18

Read and Outline: (Required)

Wesley, John, Standard Sermons, Sermon I, "Salvation by Faith," Sermon II, "The Almost Christian."

Wesley, John, Works, VIII, "The Principles of a Methodist."

Collins, Kenneth, The Scripture Way of Salvation, Chapter 3: Justification, pp. 69-100.

Read only: (Required)

Wesley, Sermons, III, "Awake, thou that sleepest." Charles Wesley.

Collins, The Scripture Way of Salvation, Chapter 2, "Christology."

Collins, A Real Christian. Complete this work.

****JUSTIFICATION/NEW BIRTH****

February 21-25

Read and Outline: (Required)

Wesley, Standard Sermons, Sermons V, "Justification by Faith," XIX, "The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God," ZLV, "The New Birth."

Collins, The Scripture Way of Salvation, Chapter 4: Regeneration, pp. 101-130.

Read only: (Required)

Wesley, Sermons, VI, "The Righteousness of Faith," VII, "The Way to the Kingdom," XVIII, "The Marks of the New Birth."

Read only: (Recommended)

Wesley, John, The Journal of John Wesley, Standard Edition, Vol. II, pp. 121-137, 156-58, 167-88.

Schmidt, Martin, John Wesley, Vol. I, Chapter 7, "The Conversion."

****WITNESS OF SPIRIT/ASSURANCE****

February 28-March 3

Read and Outline: (Required)

Wesley, Standard Sermons, Sermon X, “The Witness of the Spirit, I.”
Wesley, John, Works, VIII, A Farther Appeal, Part I, Section, I, Sub-section 1-6.
Collins, The Scripture Way of Salvation, Chapter 5: Christian Assurance, pp. 131-152.

Read only: (Recommend)

Collins, A Faithful Witness, Chapter 3, “The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit,” pp. 57-76.
Wesley, Sermons, XI, “The Witness of the Spirit, II” XII, “The Witness of our Own Spirit.”
Wesley, Works, VI, Sermon, LXXXVI, “A Call to Backsliders.”

****DOCTRINE OF GOD****

March 6-10

Read and Outline: (Required)

Wesley, Works, VI, Sermon LXVII, “On Divine Providence.”
Coppedge, Allan, John Wesley in Theological Debate, pp. 123-132.

Read only: (Recommended)

Collins, A Faithful Witness, Chapter 1, “The Doctrine of God.”
Wesley, Works, Vol. VI: Sermons LV, “On the Trinity,” LIV, “On Eternity,” LVI, “God’s
Approbation of His Works,” LXVIII, “The Wisdom of God’s Counsel;” Vol. VII:
Sermons CXI, “On the Omnipresence of God,” CXIV, “The Unity of the Divine Being.”
Wesley, Sermons, Sermon XV, “The Great Assize.”

****SIN AND PREVENIENT GRACE****

March 13-17

Read and Outline: (Required)

Wesley, Sermons, Sermon XLIV, “Original Sin.”
Lindstrom, Harold, Wesley and Sanctification, pp. 19-50 (notes on key concepts).
Collins, The Scripture Way of Salvation, Chapter 1: Grace, Creation and Fall, pp. 19-46.

Read only: (Required)

Wood, Burning Heart, Chapter XXI, “The Loathsome Leprosy,” XXV, “The Wrath to Come.”
Wesley, Works, VI, Sermon 85, “On Working Out Your Salvation.”
Collins, The Scripture Way of Salvation, pp. 185-190.

Read only: (Recommended)

Wesley, Works, VI, Sermon LVII, “On the Fall of Man,” LXII, “The End of Christ’s Coming.”
Collins, A Faithful Witness, “The Doctrine of Humanity.”

****SANCTIFICATION****

March 20-24

Read and Outline: (Required)

Wesley, Sermons, Sermons XIII, “On Sin in Believers,” XIV, “The Repentance of Believers,” XL, “Christian Perfection,” XLIII, “The Scripture Way of Salvation.”
Lindstrom, Sanctification, pp. 126-160.

Read only: (Recommended)

Wesley, Sermons, Sermon XIV, “The Repentance of Believers,” XVII, “The Circumcision of the Heart.”
Coppedge, The Promise of Something More.
Collins, The Scripture Way of Salvation, Chapter 6: Sanctification, pp. 153-170.

****CHRISTIAN PERFECTION****

March 27-31

Wesley, A Plain Account of Christian Perfection. Use study guide in syllabus.
Lindstrom, Sanctification, pp. 126-160.

Read only: (Recommended)

Wesley, Works VI, Sermons LXXVI, “On Perfection,” and LXXXIII, “On Patience.”
Collins, The Scripture Way of Salvation, Chapter 6: Sanctification, pp. 171-184.

****PASTORAL THEOLOGY****

April 3-14

Read only: (Required)

Wesley, Works, VIII:
“A Plain Account of the People Called Methodist.”
“Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies.”
“Rules of the Band-Societies.”
“Directions Given to the Band-Societies.”
Schmidt, Martin, John Wesley: A Theological Biography, Vol. 2, Part 1, Chapter 3, “John Wesley as Organizer of the Methodist Movement.”

Read only: (Recommended)

Wesley, Sermons, XLVI, “The Wilderness State,” XLVII, “heaviness through Manifold Temptations,” XLI, “Wandering Thought,” XLII, “Satan’s Devices.”
Wesley, Works, VIII:
“Minutes of Several Conversations between Wesley and Others.” (Large minutes)
“Advice to the People Called Methodists.”

****THE CHURCH AND MINISTRY****

April 17-21

Read and Outline: (Required)

Wesley, Sermons, SVI, “The Means of Grace,” XXXIV, “The Original, Nature, Property, and Use of the Law.”

Wesley, Works VII, Sermon CXV, “The Ministerial Office,” SCVII, “On Obedience to Pastors,” LXXIV, “Of the Church.”

Read only: (Recommended)

Wesley, Works, “Communion,” VII, pp. 147-157, “Baptism,” X, pp. 189-201.

Collins, The Scripture Way of Salvation, Chapter 4, “The Doctrine of the Church.”

****PREDESTINATION****

April 24-28

Read and Outline: (Required)

Wesley, Works, Vol. VI, Sermon LVIII, “On Predestination,” Vol. VII, Sermon CXXVIII, “Free Grace.”

Read only: (Required)

Lindstrom, Wesley and Sanctification, pp. 64-75.

Coppedge, Wesley in Theological Debate, pp. 132-143.

Read only: (Recommended)

Collins, A Faithful Witness, Chapter 7, pp. 163-177.

****PREDESTINATION AND AUTHORITY****

May 1-5

Read and Outline: (Required)

Wesley, Sermons, Sermon XX, “The Lord Our Righteousness.”

Read only: (Required)

Wesley, Works, Vol. X, “Predestination Calmly Considered,” “What is an Arminian?”

Wesley, Works, X, “A Blow at the Root.”

Read only: (Recommended)

Coppedge, Wesley in Theological Debate, pp. 191-222.

PLURALISM/DOCTRINAL STANDARDS**

May 8-12

Read and Outline: (Required)

Wesley, Sermons, Sermon XXXIX, “Catholic Spirit.”

Coppedge, Allan, “How Wesleyan’s Do Theology,” Doing Theology in Today’s World, ed. John Woodbridge and Thomas McComisky, pp. 267-289. If this has been read in DO501, then read: Coppedge, Allan, “John Wesley and the Issue of Authority in Theological Pluralism” A Specturn of Thought, ed., Michael Peterson.

Read only: (Required)

Wesley, Sermons, Introduction to Edition by N. Burwash, pp. V-SVIII; Sermon XXXVI, “The Law Established Through Faith, II;” Sermon XXXVII, “The Nature of Enthusiasm.”

Read only: (Recommended)

Williams, Wesley’s Theology, Chapter I, “The Catholic Spirit: Doctrine and Opinion.”

Oden, Doctrinal Standards in the Wesleyan Tradition, pp. 15-68.

DO 628

THEOLOGY OF JOHN WESLEY

COLLATERAL CHART

